

# Housing Discrimination is against the Law in South Carolina



The South Carolina Fair Housing Law makes it illegal to discriminate in housing because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, physical or mental handicaps, or familial status (families with children). The law applies to the sale, rental and financing of residential housing. Apartments, houses, mobile homes, and vacant lots to be used for housing, are covered by the Fair Housing Law. With a few exceptions, anyone who has control over residential property and real estate financing must obey the law. This includes rental managers, property owners, real estate agents, landlords, bankers, developers, builders, insurers, appraisers, and individual homeowners who are selling or renting their property.

## Examples of Housing Discrimination:

The law prohibits the following acts based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap or familial status:

- Refusing to sell or rent housing
- Lying about the availability of housing
- Evicting someone from housing
- Discriminating in housing: rent, security of facilities

## Case Examples of Discrimination:

- A real estate agent tries to persuade someone not to buy or rent a house in a certain neighborhood. This is called steering.
- A landlord refuses to rent an apartment to an applicant because the applicant is mentally disabled.
- A newspaper ad says that housing is available for white applicants.
- A black person answers a newspaper ad for an apartment. The landlord tells the person that the apartment has already been rented. It turns out that the apartment was not rented, and the landlord later rents it to a white applicant who answers the same ad.
- A landlord evicts a white tenant from her mobile home because her black friends visit her there.

- A resident manager refuses to rent an apartment to a family with children, will only allow families with children to live in certain buildings or on certain floors, or charges families with children higher security deposits.
- A landlord checks the credit records of all black and Hispanic applicants and uses small credit problems as an excuse to refuse to rent apartments to them; however, the landlord does not always check white applicants' credit records or overlooks small credit problems in their records.
- A property manager refuses to rent an apartment to a single woman, but will rent the apartment to a single man.
- A bank refuses to lend money to a house buyer who wants to purchase a house in a minority neighborhood. This is called redlining.
- A rental manager charges minority tenants a larger security deposit, or higher rent than white tenants.
- A female tenant and her family are evicted from their apartment because she refused the landlord's sexual advances.
- A landlord refuses to rent an apartment to a person with a service animal. The landlord considers the animal a pet.

## Are You Being Discriminated Against?

The South Carolina Human Affairs Commission is a state government agency that enforces the South Carolina Fair Housing Law. If you think you have been discriminated against in housing, you should contact the Commission. The Commission will investigate your complaint to see if the law was broken. If there is a violation, the Commission can help get legal remedies to which you may be entitled. Most of the time, the Commission can settle housing discrimination complaints quickly and easily. If it is necessary, the Commission may hold a hearing or take discrimination cases to court.

Discrimination can be subtle. Often people may suspect that they have been discriminated against, but they are not sure they can prove it. Call the Commission if you suspect you have been discriminated against.



**We are here to help.**

If you feel you have been discriminated against,  
we want to hear from you.

## HOW TO CONTACT THE COMMISSION

### You may call:

(803) 737-7800

Toll Free: 1-800-521-0725 (in state)

Fax: (803) 737-7835

**Monday through Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

### **Web Address:**

[www.state.sc.us/schac](http://www.state.sc.us/schac)

### **E-mail Address:**

[Information@schac.state.sc.us](mailto:Information@schac.state.sc.us)

### **Our Address is:**

South Carolina Human Affairs Commission  
Fair Housing Division  
Post Office Box 4490  
Columbia, SC 29204-4490



Visitors are received by appointment  
or as walk-ins.

**Delaine A. Frierson  
Fair Housing Director**

## Fair Housing is the Law in South Carolina



## The South Carolina Human Affairs Commission

**Raymond Buxton, II  
Commissioner**